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New York

President:	Mr. Alotaibi	(Kuwait)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Clay
	United States of America	Ms. Tachco

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2018/110)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2018/110)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Guinea-Bissau and Togo to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in the meeting: Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and His Excellency Mr. Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Touré is joining the meeting via video-teleconference from Bissau.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/110, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

I now give the floor to Mr. Touré.

Mr. Touré: I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to introduce the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/110) on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). As the report already presents a detailed outline of recent events in Guinea-Bissau, my intervention will focus on updating the Council on political developments since its issuance, while analysing present challenges and making proposals for the way forward.

This briefing takes place against the backdrop of a rapidly evolving political situation in Guinea-Bissau. Over the past several weeks, a series of key events have occurred with important ramifications. At the country level, President José Mário Vaz dismissed former Prime Minister Umaro Sissoco Embaló and replaced him with Mr. Artur Da Silva. The African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) finally held its party congress despite attempts by national authorities to block it, and re-elected Domingos Simões Pereira as its leader.

At the regional level, on 4 February, the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), pursuant to its decision of 27 January, imposed targeted sanctions on 19 individuals deemed to be obstructing the implementation of the Conakry Agreement. Those individuals and their family members are subject to travel bans and assets freeze. They have also been suspended from ECOWAS activities. The ECOWAS Authority also requested the African Union (AU), the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the European Union, the United Nations and other partners to support and facilitate the enforcement of the sanctions.

Since the imposition of the sanctions, the reaction of national stakeholders has been mixed. Those upon whom the sanctions were imposed have described them as unsubstantiated and unjust, while those in favour of the sanctions have characterized them as a necessary measure to safeguard the country's democratic course. Meanwhile, national reactions to the appointment of Mr. Artur Da Silva as the new Prime Minister have been generally consistent. On 31 January, the PAIGC issued a statement denouncing Mr. Da Silva's appointment as not being in conformity with the Conakry Agreement. Last week, the Party for Social Renewal, the second largest party in Parliament, and the group of 15 dissident parliamentarians of the PAIGC also issued public statements stressing that they would participate only in a Government formed under a consensual Prime Minister, in strict compliance with the Conakry Agreement. Thus far, the Prime Minister's efforts to consult with political parties represented in the National Assembly on the formation of an inclusive Government have not borne fruit.

Under my leadership, the group of five regional and international partners, comprised of representatives of the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, ECOWAS, the European Union and the United Nations, has continued

to harmonize efforts and messaging at opportune moments with the aim of creating a stable and enabling environment for dialogue among political leaders. So far this year, I have convened three meetings of the group. My efforts, together with those of the partners, have focused on engaging national authorities and key political stakeholders in Guinea-Bissau to defuse escalating tensions, encourage political dialogue in order to ease the political gridlock, call for the protection and respect for the human rights of Bissau-Guinean citizens, and urge all aggrieved stakeholders to pursue their grievances through legal and constitutional means.

Furthermore, under my direction, UNIOGBIS continues to play a central role in supporting and facilitating the regional mediation efforts of ECOWAS by, inter alia, ensuring the participation of Bissau-Guinean stakeholders at the ECOWAS Summit in Abuja in December 2017, providing substantive and logistical support for the ECOWAS high-level delegations during their missions to Bissau and regularly sensitizing regional leaders to ongoing political developments within the country, while encouraging them to exert their influence on protagonists in order to reach compromises.

The absence of a functioning and stable Government for more than three years has limited the ability of UNIOGBIS to effectively and sustainably implement some of its mandated tasks. As recommended by the strategic review mission headed by the Department of Political Affairs in 2016 and endorsed by the Council last year, I have streamlined the UNIOGBIS leadership and structure to promote better integration and complementarity with the United Nations country team and other international partners, while boosting the Mission's political capacities, which has enabled me to exercise my good offices more effectively at the national level. Those changes have also assisted the broader United Nations system in Guinea-Bissau in delivering more focused and integrated peacebuilding support to national authorities and civil society, including women and youth.

In this regard, the support provided by the Peacebuilding Fund has been critical. Going forward, UNIOGBIS will need to focus its energies on supporting national leaders in their efforts to appoint an acceptable Prime Minister, establish an inclusive Government, organize and conduct timely elections, and implement the priority reforms outlined in the Conakry Agreement and the ECOWAS road map.

Until the completion of the electoral cycle in 2019, Guinea-Bissau remains more than ever a country that requires a dedicated United Nations presence to prevent a further deterioration in the political and security situation at the national level and avoid any negative consequences in the subregion. In this context, my good offices, political facilitation, advocacy and mediation roles, alongside my efforts aimed at promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law and at carrying out integrated peacebuilding support, will continue to be critical.

As the Secretary-General has indicated in his report, it is vital that the United Nations remain engaged in peacebuilding efforts in the country while supporting ECOWAS involvement in resolving the political crisis for at least one more year. The Secretary-General has expressed his intention to authorize an assessment of the current mission at the end of that period and to present options to the Security Council for a possible reconfiguration of United Nations presence in the country. It is my hope that the Council will give favourable consideration to this recommendation.

The African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), through its communiqué of 13 February, has fully endorsed the measures taken by ECOWAS on 4 February, including the application of sanctions against political obstructionists. It has also requested the African Union Commission to coordinate with the ECOWAS Commission to ensure the effective implementation of these measures. Moreover, it has requested that the Security Council endorse the AUPSC communiqué that endorsed the ECOWAS decision. At this critical juncture, it would be important for the Security Council to continue to reaffirm the centrality of the Conakry Agreement and reiterate its full support for ECOWAS in its mediation efforts and for the measures that it has taken against political stakeholders deemed to be obstructing the resolution of the political crisis. I would further seek the Council's support in underscoring the importance of urgently organizing and holding legislative elections within the constitutionally mandated timeline.

Lastly, throughout the past year, the presence of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) has consistently acted as a stabilizing factor in the country. I would therefore call on members of the Council and international donors to support the continued presence of ECOMIB through to the holding of a presidential election in 2019, including by advocating for the renewal

of its mandate and the provision of the financial support needed to maintain its deployment.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Council for its continued interest in promoting peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to commend ECOWAS and its current Chair, President Faure Gnassingbé of Togo, and the ECOWAS Mediator for Guinea-Bissau, President Alpha Condé of Guinea, for their tireless mediation efforts.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation to all multilateral and bilateral partners, especially to the AU, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the European Union for their commitment to promoting peace and prosperity in Guinea-Bissau. After several years of long-term investment in the stability of Guinea-Bissau, it is time to consolidate and reap the dividends of our concerted efforts. It is vital that we accompany this process to its completion.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Touré for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Vieira.

Mr. Vieira (Brazil): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to address the Security Council in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

Since my last briefing to the Security Council, on 24 August last year (see S/PV.8031), there have been several important developments in the country. The situation in Guinea-Bissau is rapidly evolving, and the PBC is following it closely.

At the most recent Summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), held in Abuja on 16 December, the Heads of State and Government gave a 30-day deadline for political actors of Guinea-Bissau to implement the Conakry Agreement. The situation was discussed again by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa on 27 January, in the context of its thirtieth ordinary session.

After 15 months as Head of Government, Prime Minister Umaro Sissoco Embaló tendered his resignation to President José Mário Vaz, who accepted it on 16 January. On 31 January, Artur Da Silva took office as the new Prime Minister. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Togo, Robert Dussey, led two ECOWAS missions to Bissau this year. On 1 February, the ECOWAS mission issued a final communiqué stating that the nomination of a Prime Minister by consensus, as determined by the Conakry Agreement, had not taken place and that the ECOWAS Commission would start applying sanctions against those who create obstacles to a political solution. On 4 February, ECOWAS issued a decision listing 19 names that will be subject to sanctions, consisting of the exclusion from the activities of the community, a travel ban, and the freezing of assets of the sanctioned persons and their families.

The Guinea-Bissau configuration is actively engaged in following the situation in Guinea-Bissau and in providing support for the country through different initiatives. I am also in permanent contact with the Brazilian Ambassador in Bissau, who maintains excellent relations with national authorities, political actors and United Nations representatives. I would remind Council members that Brazil was one of the first countries to recognize Guinea-Bissau in 1974. In that same year we opened an embassy in Bissau.

In 2017, I organized a working breakfast with the members of the PBC and four ambassador-level meetings of the Guinea-Bissau configuration. We issued three press statements last year on the situation in the country. I also briefed the Security Council on two occasions, on 14 February (see S/PV. 7883) and on 24 August.

Between 25 and 28 July 2017, I conducted my first visit to Bissau in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration. I met many political actors, including President José Mário Vaz, then-Prime Minister Sissoco, a number of ministers, members of all parties in the Parliament, and representatives of the United Nations. On my return, I stopped in Lisbon, where I met with the Executive Secretary of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, Ms. Maria do Carmo Silveira.

On 15 December 2017, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) approved six new projects for Guinea-Bissau, totalling $7 million, to be implemented between January 2018 and June 2019. These projects are designed to help stabilize the country by providing support to the media and the justice sector, as well as support for national reconciliation efforts and the participation of young people and women in peacebuilding and in politics. The Guinea-Bissau configuration of the PBC discussed and

supported these projects in a meeting held in November last year.

The PBC will continue to support Guinea-Bissau not only through the PBF, but also through consultations with different partners, including the World Bank and other international financial institutions. In this context, I am planning a visit to Washington in the coming weeks in order to talk to representatives of the World Bank about possibilities for cooperation with Guinea-Bissau.

On Monday, 12 February, I convened a meeting of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the PBC to discuss the most recent developments in the country. On that occasion, we heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Head of the Department of Political Affairs, Mr. Jeffrey Feltman. I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his presence there. It was a positive sign of engagement and trust in the role of the PBC. It also showed his commitment to contributing to a solution to the current impasse in Guinea-Bissau.

During that meeting, the participants had the opportunity to discuss the recent developments in the country, including the decision of ECOWAS to impose sanctions. They underlined the need for dialogue and mentioned the role of the region, including the importance of the implementation of the Conakry Agreement. Member States also commended the work of the PBF in Guinea-Bissau. Many participants stressed the relevance of respecting the constitutional framework in organizing elections. Member States welcomed the non-involvement of the armed forces in the political crisis. Many delegations mentioned the positive presence of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB). Delegations also supported the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), which is expected to happen by the end of this month, and underlined the importance of the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré.

Finally, I also would like to inform the Council that it is my intention to visit Guinea-Bissau in the coming months to consult with a broad range of stakeholders on how the PBC can support peacebuilding efforts in the country and help the political actors find a solution to the current impasse. The exact date of the visit will depend on developments on the ground and will be scheduled in consultation with local authorities.

I would like to recall that Brazil is currently the Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP). As was done when I previously briefed the Council, the CPLP has endorsed my remarks.

I would like to conclude my statement by reaffirming that the PBC will continue to make every effort to support Guinea-Bissau and I would like to outline the following recommendations in that regard.

I reiterate the support of the configuration for the Bissau six-point road map and the Conakry Agreement as the framework for the resolution of the crisis. I call upon the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and key political actors to show leadership and determination by engaging in actions that would lead to the implementation of those agreements. I take note of the efforts of the region to resolve the political impasse in the country. I stress the importance of holding free and fair elections, in accordance with the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau, and call upon the international community to support that process. I underline the importance of renewing the mandate of UNIOGBIS for another year, as recommended by the Secretary-General. I also recognize the effective, preventive and deterrent role of ECOMIB. Finally, I would like to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré, for his efforts to help ensure an enabling political environment in the country.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ambassador Vieira for his briefing.

I now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin my statement by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré, for his insightful briefing on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

I will focus my statement on two main points: the implementation of the Conakry Agreement by the Guinea-Bissau signatories and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

Guinea-Bissau is going through a new phase in the serious and deep political and institutional crisis of recent years. My country and West Africa are concerned about this situation, which is characterized by a political impasse and requires the Council to act with greater firmness alongside the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to bring the political actors of Guinea-Bissau to honour their commitments. Indeed, despite the signing on 14 October 2016 of the Conakry Agreement, which was supposed to favour the appointment of a consensus Prime Minister and the establishment of an inclusive Government, the country is again without a Government and confronted by a blockage of Parliament and a deep lack of trust between the President of the Republic and his party, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde.

The stalemate heightens raises concerns not only of a detrimental delay in the electoral calendar, which calls for the holding of legislative elections in May 2018 and presidential elections in 2019, but also of the exacerbation of political tensions and the growth of the criminal economy linked to drug trafficking. My country welcomes the ongoing efforts of ECOWAS to definitively resolve the crisis in Guinea-Bissau, in strict compliance with the communal arrangements and constitutional framework of the country. The current deadlock in Guinea-Bissau is the culmination of a prolonged deterioration of the political situation and the manifest lack of will on the part of the political actors to commit themselves to a consensual settlement of the crisis, despite the appeals and efforts of ECOWAS.

Côte d'Ivoire calls on the parties to implement the Conakry Agreement in good faith and without delay. My delegation once again commends ECOWAS for its leadership and the ongoing commitment of its leaders, the Chairperson of the ECOWAS Authority, President Faure Gnassingbé of Togo, and the ECOWAS Mediator for Guinea-Bissau, President Alpha Condé of Guinea, in the quest for a solution to the political impasse in Guinea-Bissau. Côte d'Ivoire also commends the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau for its invaluable contribution to stability in the country.

ECOWAS, after a lengthy process of futile warnings, decided to adopt individual sanctions against 19 persons considered to be hostile to the process of ending the crisis in Guinea-Bissau. The sanctions are a strong signal of the resolve of ECOWAS to bring the country out of a crisis that has persisted too long. Those measures — which specifically involve the suspension of the participation in the activities of ECOWAS of all persons concerned, a travel ban on travel, the denial of visas to them and their families, and the freezing of their financial assets — must be applied with utmost rigour. The sanctions, I recall, are based on the Supplementary Act of 17 February 2012, which imposes sanctions on Member States that fail to honour their obligations vis-à-vis ECOWAS, and article 45 of the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. My country congratulates ECOWAS on taking those courageous measures, which will serve as a wake-up call to the Guinea-Bissau political class, and looks forward to their effective endorsement by the African Union.

Côte d'Ivoire invites the Council to fully support ECOWAS in the interests of peace and national cohesion in Guinea-Bissau. To that end, my country calls on the Security Council to adopt by consensus the draft resolution on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, which also requires the endorsement of those sanctions.

Furthermore, my delegation urges the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), the European Union and the United Nations to also support the efforts of ECOWAS to effectively implement measures that seek to ensure that the Conakry Agreement be upheld. Institutional and political stability, peace and security in Guinea-Bissau depend primarily on the people of Guinea-Bissau themselves. To achieve that, we call on them to take ownership of the Conakry Agreement. Without the involvement of the parties themselves, the prospects for finding a solution to the crisis and for restoring lasting peace to Guinea-Bissau will remain illusory.

With regard to the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, my delegation welcomes the various initiatives to support the political dialogue and the national reconciliation process. Furthermore, we encourage ongoing consultations in order to make progress on security sector reform and to meet the needs of the peacebuilding mechanism under way in Guinea-Bissau.

My delegation thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau for his efforts in mediation, promoting the rule of law and building the capacity of the Guinea-Bissau institutions. Côte d'Ivoire encourages its international partners, in

particular the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the CPLP and ECOWAS, to cooperate more closely with regard to their work on the ground to ensure greater effectiveness. My country also welcomes the strong involvement of Guinea-Bissau women in the political process, and in particular their role in facilitating dialogue between the parties.

With regard to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, I would like to inform the members of the Council that Côte d'Ivoire will soon submit a draft resolution for adoption on that issue. At the same time, if it is acceptable to all members of the Council, a draft press statement will also be submitted for adoption.

My country reiterates its appeal to all stakeholders in the crisis in Guinea-Bissau to participate fully in the efforts of the international community, in particular of ECOWAS, to promote the comprehensive implementation of the Conakry Agreement, which guarantees a way out of the political impasse that the country has long suffered.

I would like to finish by thanking Ambassador Mauro Vieira of Brazil, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, for all the information that he has kindly provided to the Council.

Ms. Tachco (United States of America): I wish to thank Mr. Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing and Ambassador Vieira not only for his briefing but also for his leadership of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Recently, the Security Council has witnessed significant success in West Africa in places that have experienced years or even decades of violence and tragedy. Such success includes the first democratic transfer of power in Liberia in more than 70 years and the continued consolidation of democracy in The Gambia, as well as strong economic growth in countries across the region.

However, there remain many serious and profound challenges, such as the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa, elections and reform challenges facing countries with upcoming democratic transition, and humanitarian crises and displacement, all of which merit the continued attention of the Security Council. Given the urgency and magnitude of such problems, the United States believes that a self-inflicted 30-month political impasse, such as that in Guinea-Bissau, is unacceptable.

For too long we have gathered to hear updates on fits and starts of political progress that eventually fade to obstruction and obfuscation from the country's leadership. The United States is profoundly disappointed by the decision of President Vaz to ignore the Conakry Agreement by failing to appoint a consensus Prime Minister and to create an inclusive Government. President Vaz must take urgent steps towards a unity Government that will pave the way for peaceful legislative elections in May.

The people of Guinea-Bissau are understandably frustrated at the failure of their Government to make progress on the implementation of the Agreement. They deserve better. Time is running out. We have witnessed rising tension. Political gatherings in Bissau have provoked clashes as the people of Guinea-Bissau publicly express their frustration at the skeletal political process. Those clashes led to a crackdown by the Guinea-Bissau leadership. The Government must respect the people's right to peaceful expression and protect that right.

On 4 February, the Economic Community of West African States took the ambitious step of sanctioning 19 spoilers of the Conakry Agreement, including their family members. The United States applauds such efforts to hold those in power accountable and to compel them towards finally doing what is right for the people of Guinea-Bissau. We also applaud the renewal of the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau and encourage the Guinea-Bissau military to continue its political non-interference, while playing its constitutional role.

For years, the international community and the United Nations have put resources into Guinea-Bissau to do important things for the benefit of its people. However, with a Government at an impasse, important issues such as security sector reform and combating transnational organized crime, narcotics and human trafficking cannot be adequately addressed. That is unacceptable.

As Ambassador Haley noted in the peacekeeping context, the United Nations cannot operate effectively in environments with uncooperative Governments. That also applies to political missions such as the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-

Bissau (UNIOGBIS). For UNIOGBIS to continue on that path would not be the continuation of a partnership with a willing Government but would simply enable its obstruction. Elections must take place on time and will require support. However, first, the Government must first end the impasse to convince its partners that international support will build on established political progress and a willingness to overcome differences to enable the Government to function again.

In conclusion, we once again draw attention to the ordinary people of Guinea-Bissau who, for the better part of their lives, have not known the stability of sustainable democratic governance. The Security Council must keep them in mind as we take steps to put pressure on leaders to abandon their self-serving wilfulness and to take action to better the lives of their people. They should know that our patience has now run out.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): I wish to thank Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing on the latest developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). I would also like to express appreciation to Ambassador Mauro Vieira in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for his remarks.

The continued political stand-off and institutional paralysis in Guinea-Bissau remain a source of serious concern. The consequent socioeconomic difficulties over the past two years have impacted the people of Guinea-Bissau and will eventually undermine the peace and stability of the country. We appreciate the important role of the PBC and welcome the approval of useful projects to be financed under the Immediate Response Facility of the Peacebuilding Fund to the amount of $7.3 million. Such projects will certainly contribute to easing the socioeconomic difficulties of women and young people, as well as to promoting stability.

The centrality of the Conakry Agreement to sustaining peace, security and development in Guinea-Bissau cannot be overemphasized. We reiterate our call for all stakeholders in Guinea-Bissau to respect and to comply with the Agreement in addressing their differences and the challenges facing their country. We urge them to create conditions for the holding of legislative and presidential elections in 2018 and 2019, respectively. All parties should also refrain from actions or statements that could escalate tensions and incite violence. It is indeed vital that the security and armed forces of Guinea-Bissau continue to uphold the country's Constitution and desist from interfering in the political and institutional crisis.

Those who continue to obstruct the implementation of the agreement must be given clear signals that their actions will not be tolerated. In that regard, we commend the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the high-level delegation it dispatched to Guinea-Bissau two weeks ago. We support its decision on restoring democratic governance and ensuring respect for the rule of law in Guinea Bissau, as endorsed by the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council communiqué issued today. The Council should reinforce the decision by ECOWAS and the African Union and convey a clear and united message to all the parties in this regard. We believe the concerted efforts by ECOWAS, the African Union, the United Nations and other relevant partners continues to be indispensable to finding a durable solution to the political crisis in Guinea-Bissau.

We express our support to UNIOGBIS for its continued provision of necessary support to Guinea-Bissau, with the objective of resolving the current political impasse and creating an environment for of dialogue among all of the country's actors. Accordingly, we fully agree with the recommendation of the Secretary General that the current UNIOGBIS mandate be extended for another year, until 28 February 2019.

Finally, we echo the appeal of the AU Peace and Security Council for financial support towards the continuation of the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau — whose mandate has been extended to 31 March — until the necessary training of the national security forces of Guinea-Bissau is completed. I wish to conclude by supporting the draft press statement proposed by Côte d'Ivoire, and express our readiness to work closely on the draft resolution that will renew the UNIOGBIS mandate.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, for his clear and precise briefing, which reminds us of just how critical this point is for Guinea-Bissau. I also thank Ambassador Mauro Vieira for his efforts as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding

Commission and for his insistent appeal for support to regional initiatives and for respect for the electoral cycle in Guinea-Bissau.

France is concerned about the non-implementation of the Conakry Agreement since October 2016. The Agreement, which provides for the appointment of a consensus Prime Minister, has remained a dead letter, even though it provides a plan to resolve the conflict. This political impasse has consequences on the ground. There have been several clashes between the police and opposition political parties. Respect for human rights is also not assured in Guinea-Bissau. The latest developments on the ground show that the authorities of Guinea-Bissau no longer hesitate to limit the freedom of assembly and the right to protest. The establishment of a robust compliance framework with regard to respect for public freedoms is an essential precondition to the resolution of the crisis in Guinea-Bissau. We therefore call upon the international community to be particularly vigilant in that regard.

Due to the risk of a deterioration in the political and security situation, it is high time for all parties to honour their commitments to reach national consensus, all the more so because the window of opportunity is narrowing, as legislative elections are slated for this spring. In that regard, it is particularly important to ensure that the legislative and presidential time table is adhered to.

I would like to emphasize three essential points with regard to the renewal at the end of the month of the madate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

First, we must increase our support for regional initiatives. In that regard, France welcomes the ongoing efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), especially the work of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau and the recent adoption of the sanctions list of people obstructing the implementation of the Conakry Agreement. That is an important step forward and a clear sign to the relevant local actors. We are convinced that the solution to the conflict will require consultation among local actors and the international community. In that connection, the group of five international partners based in Guinea-Bissau, which comprises the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, provides a special coordination platform that ought to be supported.

Secondly, it is crucial for the Security Council to fully assume its role in resolving the current political impasse in Guinea-Bissau. The Council should increase pressure on local actors, particularly President Vaz, and should direct the parties in Guinea-Bissau to shoulder their responsibilities. Sanctions were adopted in 2012 through resolution 2048 (2012), and additional measures could be taken in conjunction with those taken by ECOWAS.

Thirdly, it is essential to renew the mandate of UNIOGBIS, which ends 28 February, and thereby signal the commitment of the United Nations to continuing to participate in the process of resolving the conflict. We should also contemplate restructuring UNIOGBIS following an assessment of the impact of its activities on the ground.

It is time for the parties in Guinea-Bissau to move from words to action. Their commitments must now give way to concrete action.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the holding of this meeting and thanks Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, for his briefing. We also thank Ambassador Mauro Vieira for his commitment and leadership as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Peru is monitoring with concern the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Despite efforts by the international community and regional organizations to reach a solution to the political crisis, little progress has been made in the implementation of the Conakry Agreement, concluded in October 2016. We would like to make three main points.

First, Peru deems the successful holding of 2018 and 2019 elections to be crucial to achieving sustainable peace. In that regard, we are concerned about the nomination of a Prime Minister who does not enjoy consensus among all parties, as called for in the Conakry Agreement. That undermines the credibility of the Government. Additionally, four of the members of the National Electoral Commission, including its President, could not be nominated for the National Assembly, which has not convened since

January 2016. Such conditions complicate the holding of legislative elections slated for May. That is why we believe it is necessary and urgent for all parties to resume inclusive dialogue with a view to implementing the commitments undertaken.

We welcome the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, which include imposing sanctions on those who obstruct the implementation of the Conakry Agreement, in line with regional rules and regulations. We believe that it is important to increase the participation of women and youth in the necessary dialogue and subsequent elections. That is why we highlight the efforts of the Women's Facilitation Group, which seeks to increase the participation of women in the country's political processes.

Secondly, we are concerned that, despite the current relative stability, a stalled political process could lead to renewed violence and rampant crime, especially considering that the country is vulnerable to threats such as terrorism, organized crime and human trafficking. In that connection, we highlight the launching of the Network of National Human Rights Defenders. As the Secretary-General noted in his report (S/2018/110), reform is needed in this area, including strengthening the armed forces and the professionalization of the police. Similarly, we call for full respect for the fundamental right to freedom of expression in Guinea-Bissau.

Thirdly, with regard to socioeconomic development, we would like to highlight the fact that, although the World Bank has reported economic growth of 5 per cent over the past year, it should be borne in mind that such growth is primarily attributed to the country's main exports being sold at a higher price on the international market. Nonetheless, a country whose poverty rate is approximately 70 per cent is socially and economically vulnerable. That is why we believe that peacekeeping and peacebuilding require greater investment in social development, and in particular in Peacebuilding Fund projects aimed at empowering women and young people, promoting national reconciliation and strengthening the judiciary. We underscore the importance of ensuring the predictability and stability of the Fund's financing. We also believe that it is important that the activities promoted by the Peacebuilding Fund be coordinated with the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and the United Nations country team.

In conclusion, we support the renewal of the UNIOGBIS mandate for an additional year, in line with the recommendation of the Secretary-General. We thank the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the European Union and other international actors committed to assisting Guinea-Bissau for their valuable efforts.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, on behalf of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, let me thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of Mission for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), Mr. Modibo Touré, and his team for the detailed and important briefing on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. We also thank Mr. Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his briefing, in which he underscored the configuration's commitment to the various initiatives in Guinea-Bissau.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea has followed very closely and with great interest the developments in the political and institutional crisis in Guinea-Bissau. It has paid even closer attention since the country joined the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) in 2014, and now that Equatorial Guinea chairs the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau.

In my capacity as Chair of the 2048 Committee, I would like to voice our concern about the deadlock in the peace process in Guinea-Bissau, which is hindering the country's national reform programme, thereby threatening to undermine progress in the country since constitutional order was restored in 2014.

Equatorial Guinea lauds the commitment and considerable effort made, as well as the human and financial resources made available by international multilateral partners, in particular the Guinea-Bissau group of five, comprising the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the CPLP, the European Union and the United Nations. Undoubtedly, the synergy among international actors with regard to the issue in Guinea-Bissau attests to the desire and willingness of the international community to find a peaceful and

consensus-based solution in the interests of Guinea-Bissau.

The Conakry Agreement must continue to be the fundamental reference for national political actors. The Agreement not only outlines the appointment of a Prime Minister who is trusted by the President of the Republic, but whose appointment is the result of consensus among all national stakeholders. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea has taken note of the rejection of the appointment of Mr. Augusto Antonio Artur Da Silva by ECOWAS and the main political actors in Guinea-Bissau, in particular of the two main political parties — the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde and the Partido para a Renovação Social. Given the lack of consensus surrounding the appointment of the Prime Minister, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea calls upon all political actors in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, including the President of the Republic, as well as the leaders of the two main political parties, to work together to form an inclusive Government that would create the right conditions ahead of upcoming legislative elections to be held later this year, and presidential elections in 2019.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea supports the electoral calendar as outlined in the country's Constitution. That is why the Republic of Equatorial Guinea believes that an international support mechanism for the electoral process should be put in place for the purpose of updating the electoral rolls and assisting the Independent National Electoral Commission to effectively shoulder its responsibility, and with all other preparations that would allow for the holding of transparent, democratic elections whose results would put a definitive end to the political maze the country has had to navigate over the past few years.

The extension of the mandate of UNIOGBIS is a key element in resolving the crisis. As announced, ECOWAS has decided to extend the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau until 31 March. The actions of the United Nations must be part of that undertaking. The Security Council's vote, scheduled for 27 February, must allow the Mission to be extended for a year or more, until presidential elections are held in 2019. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea believes that international partners should continue to focus primarily on mediation, good offices, dialogue and direct negotiations as the only viable paths to breaking the current political and institutional deadlock.

The most recent report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2018/110) concludes that the population's latent frustration with an uncertain political environment could foster instability and crime. Equatorial Guinea reiterates its gratitude to the defence and security forces that have chosen to adopt a neutral, republican position. Therefore, we urge all political actors in Guinea-Bissau to put the interests of the country and its people, love of State and their responsibility above all other considerations so as to create the right conditions for the holding of free, fair and transparent elections.

Stability in the country must not be disassociated from economic recovery. In that regard, we welcome the support of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, through the Peacebuilding Fund, in financing various multisectoral projects. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea will take part in good offices and negotiations. Equatorial Guinea, as a member of the CPLP and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau, will support and take initiatives that it believes are necessary to assist in efforts under way to find a solution to the situation in the brotherly country of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I would like to begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré, for his briefing. I commend him and his team for the valuable work being undertaken in support of the people of Guinea-Bissau. Let me also extend my thanks to the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Mauro Vieira, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

As Ambassador Vieira mentioned his country's long-standing relations with Guinea-Bissau, I thought that I would take this opportunity to point out that Sweden recognized Guinea-Bissau in 1974, and we began supporting General Assembly resolution 2911 (XXVII), concerning its self-rule, in 1968. In the 1970s and 1980s, Guinea-Bissau was one of our largest development partner countries. There is therefore a deep and historic friendship between Sweden and the people of Guinea-Bissau, and it is in that spirit of friendship that we are engaging in support for Guinea-Bissau in meeting its current complex challenges.

Moreover, we welcome the opportunity to draw upon the strategic advice of the Peacebuilding Commission and its longer-term perspective, which are essential for sustaining peace in Guinea-Bissau. The activities financed by the Peacebuilding Fund to that end are also important. An integrated approach from the United Nations family in Guinea-Bissau can contribute positively to overcoming peacebuilding challenges. Accordingly, we welcome the efforts outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/110).

We are concerned by the ongoing and increasingly protracted political crisis in Guinea-Bissau. A lack of progress in resolving the stalemate undermines peacebuilding efforts and is holding the country's social and economic development hostage. Resolving the crisis is therefore a prerequisite for the consolidation of peace in the country. The six-point Bissau road map and the Conakry Agreement remain the only legitimate way forward, and must be implemented. The appointment of a consensus Prime Minister, as stipulated in the Agreement, is essential. National leaders must live up to their commitments and meet their responsibilities.

We strongly commend the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to mediate among the parties to find a solution to the political crisis. ECOWAS is playing an essential role on behalf of the region, and we welcome its continued efforts to reach a consensual implementation of the road map and Conakry Agreement. We welcome the ECOWAS decision to impose sanctions on those impeding the Agreement's implementation. It is important that the international community fully support regional efforts in a concerted and coherent manner. In that regard, we welcome the statement issued yesterday by the African Union in support of ECOWAS, including regarding sanctions.

Long-term peace and security in Guinea-Bissau will be achieved only when the root causes of the conflict are addressed. Constitutional reform, reconciliation and political dialogue, strengthening the rule of law through strong and inclusive institutions, and ensuring equal access to economic opportunities are all critical in that regard. It is also essential that all parts of society have their voices heard. In particular, ensuring the full and effective participation of women is crucial. We agree with the Secretary-General that the promotion of, and respect for, human rights is fundamental to sustaining peace and ensuring long-term stability and development in Guinea-Bissau. We echo the Secretary-General's call on national authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to refrain from any further acts that undermine the rule of law. Let me also take a moment to welcome the military's neutrality and its posture of non-interference in the political process.

Concerning the role of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), it has a crucial role to play in coordinating international efforts to support Guinea-Bissau, not least of which is supporting preparations for the holding of elections. There is a need to immediately refocus the Office's resources where they can be used most effectively, particularly with regard to resolving the political deadlock and supporting the electoral process so that it moves forward. We strongly support the Office's work to strengthen women's participation as active peacemakers in resolving the political crisis, including by encouraging women's mediation efforts. We welcome in particular that the integration of gender-sensitive perspectives into the work of UNIOGBIS and the United Nations country team has been accorded the highest priority by the United Nations in Guinea-Bissau. We look forward to hearing more about how that process is being taken forward.

During the Peacebuilding Commission's meeting on Guinea-Bissau on Monday this week, all key actors, including Guinea-Bissau, expressed the view that the Secretary-General's recommendation for a one-year extension of the UNIOGBIS mandate should be authorized. A one-year extension would allow for longer-term planning and more effective support for the implementation of the Conakry Agreement and the holding of elections.

The political crisis in Guinea-Bissau has gone on for far too long. It is now time to move forward with the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement and preparations for the holding of inclusive elections. The international community, together with the region, must stand ready to support the country on its path towards long-term peace and development.

Mr. Clay (United Kingdom): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Touré and Ambassador Vieira for their informative briefings.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau is concerning. It is not the first country in the world to experience a political impasse, but it is a country that continues to emerge from the serious instability and violence

of its recent past. The political impasse has prevented progress on reforms that are critical to addressing key conflict risks in Guinea-Bissau. The situation is only likely to become more volatile as we move towards elections. We have already seen violent confrontations between demonstrators and police, and witnessed worrying efforts to curb political freedoms. Economic growth is at risk, and a serious deterioration in stability would be deeply damaging for development and human rights. The illicit economy and transnational organized crime risk becoming further entrenched, with global implications. More broadly, instability in Guinea-Bissau would affect the wider region, which over the past year has been, for the most part, the site of positive political progress.

The United Kingdom welcomes the leadership shown by the West African region, particularly through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). It has shown persistence and patience. This is a crisis that began in 2015. It brokered the Conakry Agreement 15 months ago. It has agreed to countless communiqués and published innumerable statements. It has sent numerous high-level delegations to Guinea-Bissau, including three over the past six months alone. But those most responsible for Guinea-Bissau's crisis have responded with stubborn refusal to give ground and find compromise. Therefore, it is understandable that the region's patience has worn thin. ECOWAS has now been driven to impose sanctions against individuals deemed responsible for impeding the implementation of the Conakry Agreement. The African Union Peace and Security Council has endorsed that move. The United Kingdom supports the ECOWAS decision, and we urge the Security Council and the entire international community to remain united in support of ECOWAS efforts.

We also believe that it is important to recognize the bold efforts of civil society in Guinea-Bissau to resolve the crisis. In particular, the mediation efforts launched by the Women's Facilitation Group were an encouraging initiative, and we welcome the support given to them by the United Nations.

As set out in resolution 2343 (2017), political support for efforts towards the implementation of the Conakry Agreement should be a priority for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau. The key next step remains the appointment of a consensus Prime Minister so that preparations can proceed for legislative elections in 2018, as per the country's Constitution. As we open discussions on its renewal, the United Kingdom will focus on ensuring that the Mission's mandate responds to today's political reality on the ground, that it is realistic and that it is focused on the highest priority needs.

Guinea-Bissau's people watched the country emerge from a period of instability but then found their hopes for democracy obstructed by a political knot that their own leaders tied. Support from the region and the international community to prevent the country from backsliding further will not succeed until those who tied the knot untangle it. We hope that good sense, compromise and the commitment to Guinea-Bissau's future will prevail.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): First of all, I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Modibo Touré and Ambassador Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, for their useful briefings.

Poland is following with growing concern the current situation in Guinea-Bissau. We support the efforts of the international community aimed at peacefully resolving the political crisis in the country. We therefore call on all political and civil society actors, regardless of their personal differences and ambitions, to engage in dialogue in a spirit of compromise. In that context, we take note that the army is not interfering in the political process.

The implementation of the 2016 road map and the Conakry Agreement is crucial to maintaining peace and stability in the country. We appeal to the Guinea-Bissau authorities to complete their implementation and carry out the parliamentary elections scheduled for May in a peaceful atmosphere that guarantees political pluralism and impartiality. We think that women and young people should be included in all decision-making structures related to security sector reform, the national reconciliation process and institution-building. In this regard, we urge the Guinea-Bissau authorities to ensure the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of speech and information.

Poland commends the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission in Guinea-Bissau in promoting good governance, political dialogue and national reconciliation. We also welcome the significant

financial support of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) under the PBF Immediate Response Facility. Since the PBF began its activities, Poland has provided financial support to the Fund.

Poland also supports the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) as it is an important factor in reaching consensus solutions and cooperation. The decision of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, published on 4 February, imposing sanctions on those responsible for non-implementation of the Conakry Agreement is a step towards holding responsible those who are impeding a peaceful, consensus solution to the crisis. Due to the fragile security situation in the country, the presence of ECOMIB is most important. In this regard, we welcome the decision to extend ECOMIB's mandate until the end of March. Its role is essential, especially in view of the upcoming legislative elections.

The mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) expires at the end of this month. The United Nations should remain engaged in efforts towards peace in the country and support ECOWAS efforts to resolve the political crisis.

In conclusion, Poland encourages all the parties in Guinea-Bissau to engage in dialogue. We also express our full support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré. We look forward to the upcoming UNIOGBIS mandate renewal.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): We commend Special Representative of the Secretary-General Modibo Touré and Ambassador Mauro Vieira for their comprehensive briefings on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, and extend our full support for their commitment to facilitating a political solution to the crisis.

Kazakhstan is deeply concerned by the protracted political stalemate in the country. We join others in calling on all stakeholders to engage in an inclusive political dialogue and immediately implement the Conakry Agreement and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) road map to end the deadlock and restore institutional viability. It is therefore necessary to avoid differing interpretations of the Agreement.

We commend the mediation efforts of ECOWAS, under the leadership of Presidents Faure Gnassingbé of Togo and Alpha Condé of Guinea, as well as by the other members of the group of international partner organizations on Guinea-Bissau. We have taken note of the decision of ECOWAS to impose targeted sanctions on those obstructing the implementation of the Conakry Agreement. We express hope that this decision will contribute to finding a solution to the crisis and strengthen democratic institutions and capacity-building for State organs.

We welcome the extension until April of the mandate of ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB), which plays a crucial role in ensuring stability in Guinea-Bissau, and urge international partners to continue supporting ECOMIB. The importance of peacebuilding, good offices and coordination efforts of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau cannot be underestimated. We therefore support the Secretary-General's recommendation to renew the mission's mandate for one more year. We also agree with his proposal to assess the mission, should the political impasse continue. We note the importance of holding legislative and presidential elections according to the constitutional time frame, and call on international partners to provide the necessary technical, logistical and financial support for the electoral process.

The current political crisis may further fuel transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorist activities. Therefore, increased national engagement and international support are critical to enhancing and extending reforms in the security, judicial and law enforcement sectors. In addition, the most effective measures must be sought to ensure the country's stability and resilience by increasing support for the education and health sectors, as well as the existing development plans, including Terra Ranka and the United Nations peacebuilding plan.

In conclusion, we welcome the active engagement of the Women's Facilitation Group, and impress upon the national authorities the importance of ensuring the participation of women and young people in the political process at every stage and at all levels.

Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren (Netherlands): I would like first of all to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré, and the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Mr. Mauro Vieira, who spoke in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau country configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for their briefings.

For years now, Guinea-Bissau has been marked by a protracted political crisis. In a region characterized by increasing attention to and respect for the rule of law, human rights and democracy, Guinea-Bissau continues to be out of step, as indicated once again in the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/110). In the light of this, the Kingdom of the Netherlands wishes to underscore the following three points with regard to the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

First, the Conakry Agreement of 2016 and the six-point road map should remain the basis for a political solution in Guinea-Bissau, and its provisions should honoured. Secondly, the diplomatic and political efforts of the region through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) deserve the steadfast support of the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council. Thirdly, the role of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in the country at this critical juncture, with elections around the corner, is as important as ever. It is therefore imperative that its mandate be extended.

First, with respect to the Conakry Agreement, almost a year and half has passed since the Agreement was concluded. The Kingdom of the Netherlands reiterates the centrality of the Agreement in peacefully resolving the current crisis, and urges the parties to abide by its contents. It is clear that an important roadblock with regard to its implementation is the appointment of a consensus Prime Minister. The need for this appointment has become increasingly urgent. With parliamentary elections on the horizon, it is imperative that these elections be held in a timely, transparent and inclusive manner.

Secondly, with regard to support for ECOWAS, while the past six months were mainly characterized by the same intransigence as in previous reporting periods, concerted action and increased pressure on the part of the region, and ECOWAS in particular, could actually lead, when given the necessary support, to tangible progress in resolving the Bissau-Guinean crisis. Yesterday's decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council to support the efforts of ECOWAS is a case in point. The Secretary-General rightly observes in his report that the continuing efforts of ECOWAS to resolve the crisis are commendable.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to clearly point out that it supports and endorses ECOWAS mediation efforts and its imposition of sanctions. We welcome the ECOWAS unified action and believe that the presence of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau is vital to the stability of Guinea-Bissau. ECOWAS has shown before that, when united, it has the ability to act as the region's power broker, for example as it did in The Gambia. Like it did then, the Council should firmly support ECOWAS in taking up this role and responsibility, as it should in the case of any other regional organization in Africa that takes the lead in maintaining peace and security in the region.

My third point is that ECOWAS cannot do this alone. We commend the African Union and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries for their collaboration with the European Union and for the support they have brought and the constructive role they play.

From the report of the Secretary General, it is evident that UNIOGBIS plays a vital role in Guinea-Bissau. With legislative elections scheduled for 2018 and presidential elections in 2019, the role of UNIOGBIS is more crucial than ever. We therefore call for a renewal of its mandate for no less than one year, in addition to allowing for longer-term planning, including setting more concrete priorities for the mission and making adaptations to meet specific needs. UNIOGBIS's convening power in Bissau remains essential, as will be its role in ensuring peaceful, free and democratic elections in Guinea-Bissau, as well as a smooth post-election process. Renewing the mandate for less than 12 months would send the wrong signal.

In conclusion, sustained pressure to implement the Conakry Agreement, the maximum possible support to ECOWAS's ongoing efforts and measures and UNIOGBIS's continued support to the political process will be crucial factors in ending the deadlock in Guinea-Bissau, particularly in the light of the constitutionally mandated elections.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/110) presented by Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), and the briefing by Ambassador Mauro Vieira of Brazil in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

There has been no significant progress or visible improvement in the situation in Guinea-Bissau, where the general instability seems almost impervious to

change, thereby jeopardizing the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement, which is unquestionably the fundamental framework for a peaceful solution to the crisis and for achieving sustainable and lasting peace there. In our view, the negative effects are likely to exacerbate matters if the parties cannot definitively condemn sectarian interests and contribute effectively to the mediation efforts and good offices of the relevant international, regional and subregional organizations. Bolivia firmly repudiates any action that could destabilize or jeopardize the ongoing dialogue and reconciliation process that has been established with the participation of all the parties concerned.

We urge that the agreements be definitively consolidated in line with the inclusive national dialogue, which would enable Government members, the political parties represented in the National Assembly and every sector of civil society to arrive at a consensus and implement the agreements constructively through a legitimate commitment to achieving a lasting political and social solution whose sole aim is benefiting the people of Guinea-Bissau, in strict respect for their sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

We acknowledge the active participation of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and its Mission in Guinea-Bissau, the European Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and UNIOGBIS, through its Special Representative, and their ongoing efforts to achieve a rapprochement between the conflicting parties. We believe that UNIOGBIS's work, focused on initiatives aimed at creating opportunities for dialogue and facilitating cooperation in the security and political sectors with the goal of forming an inclusive Government, must be reinforced. It will be crucial to increase the Office's capacity to use peaceful means to deal with the crisis if it is to have more effective and efficient results. We therefore support the recommendation in the Secretary-General's report that the mission's mandate be renewed for another year.

We also commend the work being done by the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, appropriately chaired by Brazil, and we emphasize the importance of strengthening its coordination, information exchange and active collaboration with the Security Council, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. We continue to encourage the initiative of the Women's Forum for Peace. The efforts of women in Guinea-Bissau to achieve a political solution shows that a gender perspective and female participation in mediation and dialogue at all levels are essential.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate once again that in a time of political, institutional and social crisis, ensuring the welfare of the population and especially its most vulnerable sectors should be the overriding interest guiding Guinea-Bissau on a path to permanent stability.

Mr. Zhang Dianbin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank Special Representative Touré and Ambassador Vieira, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, for their briefings. The situation in Guinea-Bissau has been generally stable in recent months, but it will still require all the parties to work together to meet each other halfway if they are to resolve the political impasse peacefully and as soon as possible.

China hopes that the parties in Guinea-Bissau will consider the country's interests, intensify their dialogue and communication in order to bridge differences quickly, implement the Conakry Agreement as soon as possible, form an inclusive Government and resume nation-building efforts. Meanwhile, the international community should continue to follow the situation in Guinea-Bissau. China will continue to support the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau in exercising its good offices and conducting mediation efforts under Mr. Touré's leadership, with the aim of coordinating international support for Guinea-Bissau, promoting political dialogue and advancing the country's economic and social development.

The international community should continue to support regional and subregional organizations such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in their role as mediators, while maintaining respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guinea-Bissau and supporting the countries of the region in settling African issues through African means.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing on the evolving political situation in Guinea-Bissau. We take note of the report of the Secretary-

General (S/2018/110) and the briefing by Mr. Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil and Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. Russia supports the efforts of the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries to normalize the situation in Guinea-Bissau, which is undergoing a prolonged political, social and economic domestic crisis.

We are concerned about the lack of tangible progress in implementing the Conakry Agreement. We want to emphasize how crucial the Agreement is to mitigating the political hostility and reducing Guinea-Bissau's potential for conflict. We urge the country's executive and legislative representatives to focus on forming an inclusive Government, introducing reforms, especially in the security sector and the Constitution, and increasing their joint efforts to prepare for parliamentary and presidential elections. It will be vital to strengthen the constitutional order and the rule of law and resolve the accumulating socioeconomic issues. We are pleased that the country's political forces continue to act with regard for the law and that the military has remained neutral. We have taken note of the ECOWAS communiqué of 4 February on imposing targeted sanctions on 19 members of Guinea-Bissau's political elite.

Regarding the possibility of imposing similar measures based on the provisions of Security Council resolution 2048 (2012), we would like to point out that the resolution's main aim was restoring constitutional order, which in practical terms was achieved several years ago now. The result is that the resolution's sanctions measures are very outdated. In our opinion its listing criteria have little to do with Guinea-Bissau's current political situation, and in any case would not be usable against participants in the political process who are acting within the law.

We are compelled to conclude that the opinions of the Secretary-General's report on the security sector situation give the impression that things have been left unsaid. It would have been more logical to discuss how the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) is implementing the provisions of its mandate with regard to building Guinea-Bissau's capacity to combat transnational crime and drug trafficking, after describing the actual state of affairs in those areas.

In general, given the overall situation in Guinea-Bissau, we are willing to consider the Secretary-General's proposal to extend UNIOGBIS's mandate. However, we believe that the Special Representative should focus not only on helping the people of Guinea-Bissau emerge from their political deadlock and preparing for the parliamentary elections in May but also on effectively addressing the root causes of the problems in Guinea-Bissau, which lie in its Constitution's structural contradictions. If the work of constitutional reform is not completed by the start of the next electoral cycle, the country risks encountering the same problems with the new parliament and President.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Kuwait.

At the outset, I join other Council members in thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Modibo Touré, for his valuable briefing. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Mauro Vieira for his briefing as the chief of Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. We commend their efforts to support security, stability and socioeconomic development in Guinea-Bissau.

We have been following the recent political developments there and regret the fact that none of the provisions of the Conakry Agreement have been implemented since signing it in October 2016. It is unacceptable that there has so far been no appointment of Prime Minister who enjoys consensus by the relevant two parties, which is critical to implementing other items of the Agreement.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau differs from other cases before the Security Council in having no security aspects. Unfortunately, however, the impasse has lasted more than a year, and it is the people of Guinea-Bissau who are suffering the consequences. In that regard, we commend the steps that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has taken to advance the political process, including measures for the imposition of sanctions on those obstructing the implementation of the Conakry Agreement, as well as the decision to extend the mandate of its Mission in Guinea-Bissau until the end of March. We want to emphasize the relevance of the role of such regional organizations in resolving regional issues.

The efforts of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)

deserve support, since it is dealing with a difficult and complicated political situation. However, we hope that it will be able to make progress during the coming period with respect to conducting legislative elections this year and presidential elections next.

The legislative and presidential elections, to be held in 2018 and 2019 respectively, must take place within the specific time frame. We therefore call on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, along with all stakeholders in Guinea-Bissau, such as the European Union, the African Union, ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, to spare no efforts towards that end. We also call on the Government of Guinea-Bissau to ensure its citizens' full participation in the elections, as well as security and freedom of expression and assembly for all.

The cooperation between UNIOGBIS and civil-society organizations in promoting and developing the role of women in Guinea-Bissau is very positive. We hope that UNIOGBIS will make a greater effort to guarantee the full participation of all components of the society, especially women and young people, in the next political process and will continue to promote other aspects of its mandate until the current impasse is resolved.

In conclusion, we reiterate the importance of the Conakry Agreement as the basic reference for resolving this political crisis in Guinea-Bissau, and the efforts of ECOWAS and President Alpha Condé of Guinea to advance the political process in order to maintain the security and stability of Guinea-Bissau and the region. We stand ready to cooperate with Côte d'Ivoire in preparing a draft resolution for the extension of the UNIOGBIS mandate, in response to a request by the Secretary-General. We also support the issuance of a Press Statement to clarify the unified position of the Council regarding the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Delfim da Silva (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting my delegation to the Security Council table and for giving me the floor. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate your country, Kuwait, on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. We wish you success in your work.

I would like to thank Mr. Modibó Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, for his presentation today of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/110). I would also like to thank Ambassador Mauro Vieira of Brazil once again for his constructive statement on behalf of peacebuilding and constitutional and democratic order in Guinea-Bissau. And I would like to express our gratitude to all the Ambassadors of States members of the Security Council for their attention to my country, Guinea-Bissau.

The political crisis in Guinea-Bissau did not begin with the signing of the Conakry Agreement in October 2016, but much earlier. The Conakry Agreement represents a step in the right direction for resolving the crisis by consensus. In the past 15 months, the two main parties — the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and the Party for Social Renewal (PRS) — have repeatedly and publicly expressed their disagreement on a crucial point of the Agreement, which is having consensus on choosing a candidate for the post of Prime Minister. If a consensus was reached, the agreed candidate would then be appointed by the President of the Republic, in line with the Constitution. The PAIGC states that there was such a consensus in Conakry. The PRS, for its part, affirms that there was not.

Fifteen months later, the lack of consensus has prevented the appointment of a Prime Minister, which must be consensus-based. How can the President appoint a consensus Prime Minister without, at the very least, the prior agreement of the two largest political parties? In short, the crisis over the consensus is really what has paralysed the Conakry Agreement and is prolonging the stalemate in the 15-month political crisis in Guinea-Bissau. The question is how to overcome the crisis concerning the consensus. Some believe that the imposition of sanctions will be conducive to it. We are not sure of that. Sanctions are unlikely to defuse a crisis and can even be counterproductive. It is important to bear in mind that while it is easy to adopt sanctions, it is much more difficult to impose a consensus. In any case, continuing to seek a solution to the crisis is clearly the most important thing that we must do.

We need a compromise solution, a credible name, a person whose academic, political and professional

background can bring about such a compromise. We need someone who, without being the favourite candidate of the PAIGC or the PRS, has a background that would enable him to bring the parties together and thereby reach a compromise. The recent appointment to the post of Prime Minister of a PAIGC leader, the engineer Artur Silva, a former Minister of four Government departments — Fisheries, Defence, Education and Foreign Affairs — suggests that he is the right person to help bring about such a compromise. Moreover, after his appointment, Silva was re-elected to the higher bodies of the PAIGC, its Central Committee and Political Bureau — at the party's most recent congress, which ended a few days ago, proving that he has earned the political confidence of the party's most important bodies.

Prime Minister Silva has already held working meetings in Bissau, which I would say are encouraging, with all the parties to the Conakry Agreement — the Ambassadors of Nigeria, Senegal, China, the Gambia and the representative of the Economic Community of West African States in Guinea-Bissau. Finally, through the appointment of a senior PAIGC leader, justice can be done to the party that won the last legislative elections. But above all, there will be no losers, since the PRS will be guaranteed strong representation in a Government of inclusion. This is not a zero-sum game. Under this principle of compromise, which allows a certain degree of flexibility regarding the principle of consensus, there will undoubtedly be a winner — my country, Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, I reiterate our thanks to the members and want to assure the Council that Guinea-Bissau will continue to count on their support in these difficult times for the sake of civil peace, political stability and solidarity.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Togo.

Mr. Kpayedo (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to address the Council once again on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, in my capacity as Coordinator of the Ambassadors of the member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that are accredited to the United Nations.

I also want to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his report on the situation in Guinea-Bissau (S/2018/110), presented today by Mr. Modibo Touré, his Special Representative, whom we welcome here, along with his team, and whose briefing has provided us with a thorough picture of the situation in that country. Lastly, I would like to thank Mr. Mauro Vieira for his commitment and efforts in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Since it began, the crisis in Guinea-Bissau has continued to be a source of great concern for the Heads of State of West Africa, who are therefore sparing no effort to arrive at a favourable and lasting outcome. This issue has been on the agenda of every recent meeting of our subregional organization's Summit. In my last statement to the Council in August (see S/PV.8031), I discussed the trampling of the implementation of the Conakry Agreement, which led to the possibility of having recourse to the ECOWAS sanctions. Since then, the impasse is still there, despite the proposal for a new road map by President José Mário Vaz at the conclusion of the fifty-second Ordinary Session of Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, held in Abuja on 16 and 17 December 2017, and reaffirmed in Addis Ababa at the ECOWAS Extraordinary Session held on 27 January, on the margins of the 30th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly.

In that regard, the President-in-Office of ECOWAS, Mr. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé, in consultation with his peers, dispatched a mission of the ministerial sanctions committee to Guinea-Bissau on 31 January and 1 February 2018, led by Mr. Robert Dussey, Togo's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration. Its purpose was to assess the progress made by the parties to the crisis in implementing the Agreement and to report to the ECOWAS Heads of State on the potential consequences if the stalemate persisted. Following that report, the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, in view of the fact that no significant progress has been seen in the implementation of the Conakry Agreement despite ongoing mediation and calling on all of Guinea-Bissau's political leaders to show their sense of responsibility and respect for their country's Constitution through a frank and inclusive dialogue, decided to activate the sanctions mechanisms against individuals and organizations that are hindering a settlement of the crisis, with the aim of promoting the restoration of democratic governance and respect for the rule of law in Guinea-Bissau.

As a result, 19 political figures have been subject to sanctions since 4 February, in accordance with our

decision 01/2018, on individual sanctions designed to promote the restoration of democratic governance and respect for the rule of law in Guinea-Bissau. The list is not exhaustive,and the monitoring committee for the implementation of sanctions — composed of Togo, Guinea and the ECOWAS Commission — therefore reserves the right to revise it as the situation on the ground changes. Here I should point out, as the representative of Côte d'Ivoire noted earlier, that these sanctions were established through ECOWAS's Supplementary Act of 17 February 2012 concerning sanctions regimes against Member States that do not honour their obligations to the Community, and are based on article 45 of the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. They include suspended participation in Community activities, and a travel ban and financial assets freeze for those listed and their families, wherever they may be.

The sanctions cannot be effectively implemented without the assistance of the United Nations and other multilateral and regional organizations. In that regard, I would like to take this opportunity to call for multifaceted support to ECOWAS in implementing these measures, which we hope will help to create an atmosphere conducive to the restoration of dialogue among the people of Guinea-Bissau, with a view to resolving this political and institutional impasse, which has lasted too long.

In conclusion, I would once again like to invite all the parties to the Guinea-Bissau crisis to show a spirit of compromise, responsibility and openness to a peaceful, negotiated and lasting solution to this dispute, which hampers development efforts in the country and therefore in the entire subregion, which is still dealing with persistent security challenges.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.